

Memorial

Good research paved way for recognition

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He told Rekdahl what documentation to gather, then got in touch with a committee that was working on a new memorial set for installation at the Vancouver Barracks.

"I knew the Sadd family and I jumped on it right away," Peake said. "I also made about five different calls up to Seattle and Olympia, trying to find out if Curtis Sadd's name was inscribed on the state memorial (at the Capitol in Olympia)."

Although missing from the Vancouver memorial, Sadd's name was found on the state monument.

Members of the Clark County Veterans War Memorial Committee said some of the confusion

can be traced to Sadd's trip to Seattle to get his mother's permission to join the Navy at the age of 17, because his father, Oscar Sadd, refused to sign the papers allowing his underage son to enlist.

"About five of us wanted to go in together," said Jim Nott, 76, of Camas. "It was the adventure, it was the thing to do because we (Americans) were attacked."

While Curtis Sadd was inducted into the Navy in Portland on Dec. 26, 1941, and was later listed as a Camas resident, some government records appear to have reported Seattle as his hometown.

Gathering information

Rekdahl collected information including Curtis' birth certificate, naval records, proof of high school attendance and next-of-kin notification of his death. It took time because, as Rekdahl points out, military officials hesitate to release records to people outside

the immediate family.

Meanwhile, a project was under way to gather additional names for a granite monument replacing the courthouse memorial in a new location at the Vancouver Barracks. Rekdahl expected to see his friend commemorated on the new structure dedicated in November 1998. But somehow Curtis Sadd's name was not on the list sent to a Georgia manufacturer for inscription.

Whatever went wrong, researchers agreed to correct the oversight as soon as they saw Rekdahl's documentation.

"The man did such a remarkable amount of research and paperwork, we all gave it our blessing, and we apologize it was overlooked by mistake," said Bruce Barker, a Battle Ground author and World War II history buff. "I wish we would have had him on our research committee."

John Wulle, a memorial advisory committee member and Clark County district judge, said the

committee knew in advance it would be likely to miss a few county veterans, so a fund was established to cover the cost of adding names as needed.

"We also left space in case of another (military) conflict," Wulle said.

Bruce Fuerstenberg of Vancouver Granite Works inscribed Curtis Sadd's name on the Clark County Veterans War Memorial last Wednesday.

However many phone calls he's had to make or letters Rekdahl has written, he's in no doubt the effort was worthwhile.

"When it's all done, I think it will close this chapter of seeing my old friend get recognition for his service in World War II, and getting killed at such a young age," he said.

Rekdahl did honor his friend in another way, in a tribute more personal than a name etched in granite.

His only son is named Tim Curtis Rekdahl.